

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-14 are currently pending in this case. By this paper, claims 1-4 and 9-11 have been amended. In view of these amendments and the following remarks, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the case.

In the Office Action, claims 1-7, 9-11 and 13-14 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Lorentzen et al. (5,520,890). The Lorentzen reference discloses a multiphase catalytic reactor comprising a vessel which contains a number of vertical reaction tubes.

By this paper, independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to indicate that the reactor system of the present invention includes two or more separated, individual reactors which are operated as a single unit. The separated, individual reactors of the present invention are different than the plurality of vertical reaction tubes disclosed in the Lorentzen reference. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claims 1 and 9 are not anticipated by the Lorentzen et al. reference. Further, Applicants submit that there is no teaching or suggestion in Lorentzen that a plurality of separated, individual reactors could be operated as a single unit with one or more common reactant feed lines and one or more common product discharge lines.

Inasmuch as the remaining claims all depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 or claim 9, Applicants submit that the dependent claims would not have been anticipated nor would they have been obvious over the Lorentzen et al. reference.

In the Office Action, claim 12 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lorentzen et al in view of Cachera (3,968,653). For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that claim 12 would not have been obvious in view of the cited references. The addition of Cachera does not teach or suggest the feature of two or more separated, individual reactors being operated as a single unit.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance and favorable consideration by the Examiner is requested. Should the Examiner find

any impediment to the prompt allowance of the claims that could be corrected by telephone interview with the undersigned, the Examiner is requested to initiate such an interview.

Respectfully submitted,

HANS GEORG LEFFER

P. O. Box 2463
Houston, Texas 77252-2463

By /Craig M. Lundell/
Attorney, Craig M. Lundell
Registration No. 30,284
(713) 241-2475